



## News Release

For Immediate Release

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### **First workers complete training under state's workforce literacy training initiative**

SPENCER, Ind. (April 25, 2007) -- The first 38 of approximately 2,600 workers participating in a state-funded project aimed at raising the workplace skills level of Indiana's workers received certificates of completion today in a ceremony held in Spencer at the headquarters of Boston Scientific.

The thirty-eight workers at Boston Scientific were trained under a grant of \$200,000 awarded last year to the Indiana Health Industry Forum on behalf of Boston Scientific, Cook Urological, and Hill-Rom to raise the basic level of the employees' workplace literacy skills. All told, ten companies or consortia received \$1.2 million from the state last year under the workforce literacy initiative.

"Our ultimate goal with these grants is to raise everyone up one level," said Andrew Penca, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. "We need to become more efficient and effective in how we train and retrain our adult workers in Indiana if we are to compete successfully in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

In order to receive their certificate, Boston Scientific workers had to show an increased level of performance in reading, math, and digital literacy. As part of the grant, a new contextually-based training curriculum is being developed for manufacturers of health care products that can be used to increase workplace skills for other manufacturers. Under the training, individual critical skills plans for each worker were developed.

The training workers receive under this program is driven by employers' specific needs for basic workplace skill education, focusing on the foundational academic and employability skills required for success in the modern workplace. They include basic reading, math, communication, problem solving, critical thinking, and computer literacy skills. The education is contextualized to the specific workplace, in that educational providers develop a curriculum that includes specific terminology, materials, and applications from the company hosting the education.

Training will be concluded later this year at the other organizations. Those organizations which received funding last year and the amount of their grants are:

- Clarian Health Partners, Indianapolis \$200,000
- The Center for Workforce Innovation, Valparaiso \$184,000
- Indiana Health Industry Forum, Indianapolis \$200,000

- Ivy Tech Community College - South Bend, South Bend \$198,650
- Ivy Tech Community College – Bloomington, Bloomington \$200,000
- Center for Mental Health, Anderson \$49,927
- Steuben County Literacy Coalition, Angola \$43,634
- St. Francis Healthcare Foundation, Beech Grove \$49,608
- Vincennes University for Aisin USA, Vincennes \$45,864
- Vincennes University for Wishard Hospital, Vincennes \$44,657

The initiative is designed to address the state's workplace basic skills deficit. A study released in January 2005 by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce found that one in three workers in Indiana had workplace literacy skills below nationally-identified minimum standards necessary for successful employment in a knowledge-based economy. As a result of that study, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce established Ready Indiana to support the development of employer-driven training programs. The program provides a single point of contact for any Indiana employer – large and small – for relevant and concise assistance in improving workforce productivity. The effort delivers examples of employer-driven programs which can be adapted to other companies and streamlines information that makes it easy for employers to implement effective basic-skill improvement programs

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve worker skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with Indiana's 26 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service.